

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification is changed as follows:

Page 3, second full paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a powders-affixed nonwoven fabric prepared from a fiber web comprising fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less in a dispersed state in the powders-containing fiber web, the powders-containing and powder materials affixed to the fiber web being formed by a method other than a wet-laid method.

Page 4, first full paragraph:

Accordingly, the present invention also relates to a process for manufacturing a powders-affixed nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of:
ejecting aggregates of fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or a group of the aggregates, and/or mechanically dividable fiber capable of generating fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or aggregates of the mechanically dividable fibers, together with powder materials, from a nozzle into a gas by an action of a compressed gas, to thereby divide the aggregates of the fine short fibers or the group thereof into the fine short fibers, and/or divide the mechanically dividable fibers or the aggregates thereof into the fine short fibers, and disperse the resulting fine short fibers and the powder materials;
collecting the dispersed fine short fibers and the powder materials to form a powders-containing fiber web; and affixing the powder materials, while forming a nonwoven fabric from the powders-containing fiber web to obtain the powders-affixed nonwoven fabric.

The paragraph bridging pages 4 and 5:

In accordance with the present invention, there is also provided a sheet material comprising at least one layer of a powders-affixed nonwoven fabric prepared from a fiber web comprising powder materials and fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less in a dispersed state in the fiber web, and powder materials affixed to the powders-containing the fiber web being formed by a method other than a wet-laid method.

Page 5, second full paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, there is also provided a process for manufacturing a sheet material comprising the steps of:

Ejecting aggregates of fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or a group of the aggregates, and/or mechanically dividable fibers capable of generating fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or aggregates of the mechanically dividable fibers, together with powder materials, from a nozzle into a gas by an action of a compressed gas, to thereby divide the aggregates of the fine short fibers or the group thereof into the fine short fibers, and/or divide the mechanically dividable fibers or the aggregates thereof into the fine short fibers, and disperse the resulting fine short fibers and the powder materials;

collecting the dispersed fine short fibers and the powder materials to form a powder-containing fiber web; and bonding the powder-containing fiber web, affixing the powder materials thereto, and at the same time bonding a layer free of the powder materials, to obtain the sheet material containing a powder-affixed nonwoven fabric affixing the powder materials, while forming a nonwoven fabric from the powder-containing fiber web, and at the same time bonding a layer free of the powder materials, to obtain the sheet material containing a powder-affixed nonwoven fabric.

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (amended) A powder-affixed nonwoven fabric prepared from a fiber web comprising powder materials and fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less in a dispersed state in said powder-containing fiber web, and powder materials affixed to said powder-containing fiber web being formed by a method other than a wet-laid method.

7. (amended) A process for manufacturing a powder-affixed nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of: ejecting aggregates of fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or a group of the aggregates, and/or mechanically dividable fibers capable of generating fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or aggregates of the mechanically dividable fibers, together with powder materials, from a nozzle into a gas by an action of a compressed gas, to thereby divide the aggregates of the fine short fibers or the group thereof into the fine short fibers, and/or divide the mechanically dividable fibers or the aggregates thereof into the fine short fibers, and disperse the resulting fine short fibers and the powder materials;

Preliminary Amendment
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collecting the dispersed fine short fibers and the powder materials to form a powders-containing fiber web; and ~~bonding the powders-containing fiber web~~, and affixing the powder materials, while forming a nonwoven fabric from the powders-containing fiber web thereto to obtain the powders-affixed nonwoven fabric.

12. (amended) A sheet material comprising at least one layer of a powders-affixed nonwoven fabric prepared from a fiber web comprising powder materials and fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less in a dispersed state in said powders-containing fiber web, said powders-containing materials affixed to said fiber web being formed by a method other than a wet-laid method.

14. (amended) A process for manufacturing a sheet material comprising the steps of:

ejecting aggregates of fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or a group of the aggregates, and/or mechanically dividable fibers capable of generating fine short fibers having a fiber diameter of 4 μm or less and a fiber length of 3 mm or less, or aggregates of the mechanically dividable fibers, together with powder materials, from a nozzle into a gas by an action of a compressed gas, to thereby divide the aggregates of the fine short fibers or the group thereof into the fine short fibers, and/or divide the mechanically dividable fibers or the aggregates thereof into the fine short fibers, and disperse the resulting fine short fibers and the powder materials;

collecting the dispersed fine short fibers and the powder materials to form a powders-containing fiber web; and ~~bonding the powders-containing fiber web~~, affixing the powder materials ~~thereto~~, while forming a nonwoven fabric from the powders-containing, and at the same time bonding a layer free of the powder materials, to obtain the sheet material containing a powders-affixed nonwoven fabric.